

What is claimed is:

[Claim 1] In an improved system for packaging, shipping and displaying product containers, the system comprising a plurality of vertically spaced trays for holding the product containers; outer support posts having hollow interiors, the outer support posts located over openings in each tray such that their hollow interiors communicate with the openings; and inner guide posts inserted inside the outer support posts and through the tray openings to lock the trays together, the improvement comprising: a base assembly comprising an outer base box and a center base member that fits within the base box, the center base member having a top edge and means for holding a first set of outer support posts in an upright position within the base assembly.

[Claim 2] The system of claim 1 wherein the center base member comprises two opposing vertical sidewalls and two opposing vertical end walls joined together to define vertical corners, and the holding means comprises at least one inwardly collapsed section formed from contiguous portions of a sidewall and an end wall.

[Claim 3] The system of claim 2 wherein the inwardly collapsed section defines an interior cylindrical space for accommodating an upright outer support post.

[Claim 4] The system of claim 3 wherein the cylindrical space has a rectangular cross-section.

[Claim 5] The system of claim 2 comprising at least one inwardly collapsed section at each corner.

